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Annual ministerial review: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to global public health

Statement submitted by Gray Panthers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2009/100.

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Statement*

The world is a global community. People encounter increasing risk of epidemic disease outbreak, natural disasters, and hazard pollution. No single country can resolve its public health problem without the cooperation of the others. Global financial crisis, food crisis, and climate change crisis add more challenges to global public health with limited international financial aid commitment. Gray Panthers offer the following global public health recommendations.

- Each country has primary responsibility for its public health. Government needs to involve people in all sectors in policymaking and implementation. An inclusive policy with accountability and transparency will win support of people and global financial partners. A non-governmental organization (NGO) can input ideas and oversee implementation.
- Educate people about clean water and hygiene to prevent infection. Educate them about healthy diet, physical activity, environmental health, mental health and social activity for disease prevention and good quality of life.
- Use information and communications technology in education, information-sharing, conferencing and billing. Knowledge empowers people. It helps doctors treat patients more effectively. An effective and secured database system not only saves money by requiring fewer clerks but takes the billing hassle away from doctors and patients.
- Build a service credit system. In this global financial crisis, a lot of people are losing jobs. With proper training, people can help take care of patients and earn service credits for exchange of their future care.
- Give incentives and build a good volunteering system.
- Pay medical school tuition for doctors and nurses for the exchange of service in rural areas after graduation.
- Increase sale tax on tobacco and alcohol to discourage consumption. Impose regulation of higher medical fee for smoker and alcohol abuser.
- Punish the environment hazard polluters and ask them to pay for their action.

Gray Panthers believe health care is a human right. Every human being has the right of basic health care and medical treatment. We advocate for environmental justice. The United Nations has a responsibility to evaluate the agreed implementation status and to be sure of the proper use of financial aid. Learning from the successful countries, constant discussion with the irresponsible government and all the stakeholders, setting regulations, with the help of global partners and NGOs, the United Nations can achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

* Issued without formal editing.